

USPTO Customer No. 25280

Case # 5308

REMARKS**35 USC Section 103 Rejection:**

Claims 1 – 3 and 9 – 11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kostial (EP 1232688A2) in view of Antinoro (US Pat. No. 6,796,996).

Applicants have cancelled claims 1 – 3 and 9 – 11. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is now moot.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 4 – 8 and 12 – 13 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent format to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 14 – 19 were allowed.

Applicants have amended claims 4 – 8 and 12 – 13 to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, in order to overcome this objection. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that all of claims 4 – 8 and 12 – 19 now stand in condition for allowance.

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Conclusion:

For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4 – 8 and 12 – 19 now stand in condition for allowance.

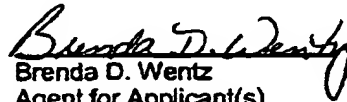
Should any issues remain after consideration of this Amendment and accompanying Remarks, the Examiner is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned in the hope that any such issue may be promptly and satisfactorily resolved.

To any extent required for acceptance of this paper, an extension of time is hereby requested. In the event that there are additional fees associated with the submission of these papers (including extension of time fees), authorization is hereby provided to withdraw such fees from Deposit Account No. 04-0500.

January 31, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

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